

Act not referenced in the Trust Fund Code must be approved by the Committee on Ways and Means before the authorizations are funded. Similarly, expenditures from the Highway Trust Fund into the Boat Safety Account and the Sport Fish Restoration Account in the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund require conforming Trust Fund Code language.

I now understand that you are seeking to have the bill considered by the House as early as next week. In addition, I have been informed that your Committee will seek a Manager's or Committee amendment to the bill which will include language I am supplying (attached) to address the necessary trust funds provisions. The amendment would extend through September 30, 1998, the general expenditure authority and purposes of the Highway Trust Fund contained in section 9503(c); extend, through September 30, 1998, authority to make expenditures from the Highway Trust Fund to the Boat Safety Account in the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund; and extend through September 30, 1998, authority to make expenditures from the Highway Trust Fund to the Sport Fish Restoration Account in the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund relating to small-engine fuels receipts.

Based on this understanding, and in order to expedite consideration of this legislation, it will not be necessary for the Committee on Ways and Means to mark up this legislation. This is being done with the further understanding that the Committee will be treated without prejudice as to its jurisdictional prerogatives on such or similar provisions in the future, and it should not be considered as precedent for consideration of matters of jurisdictional interest to the Committee on Ways and Means in the future.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter, confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 2516, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be placed in the Record during consideration of the bill on the Floor. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance on this matter.

With best personal regards,

BILL ARCHER,

Chairman.

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I must express grave concerns about this measure in light of reports in yesterday's press. Assurances were made to our chairman, Mr. SHUSTER, and our ranking member, Mr. OBERSTAR, regarding the passage of this 6-month extension of ISTEA. They worked tirelessly this year to put together a bill which met the Nation's transportation needs. They withdrew it in favor of this temporary alternative with assurances of an opportunity to address the irresponsibly low transportation funding levels in the budget agreement. It would appear that the leadership has already closed that door.

I find your statements in yesterday's Congress Daily, Mr. Speaker, to be deeply troubling. You were quite generous, during recent visits to our State of Michigan, in pledging your support for more funding for our deteriorating road system. Since that time, you have personally intervened in stopping a bill which would have delivered a much needed increase to our State, and yesterday, you reneged on your promise to seek more transportation funding for the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Michigan sincerely want to believe your promises, and I can think of one individual in particular who is most interested in whether you will. Monday night our Governor, John Engler, experienced

what literally thousands of Michiganites experience every week: his car blew a tire when it hit a pothole on Interstate 96. The next time the Governor calls you, I don't think there will be any doubt what he will be calling about.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday you expressed concern for returning money to our citizens. If you want to return money to the people, Mr. Speaker, free the highway trust fund to fix our broken roads. The gas taxes were collected to fix roads, and it should be spent to fix roads, not to offset spending on other programs. Let's keep our word to the American people and use our transportation trust funds for transportation.

I thank Mr. SHUSTER and Mr. OBERSTAR for their efforts.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my support for this short-term extension of ISTEA. The bill serves many important purposes. It allows States to continue to operate and manage their programs without interruption in the new fiscal year. At the same time, it will allow us to fully consider and make our case for increased transportation investment during budget negotiations next year. We then will be able to move the multiyear reauthorization bill, H.R. 2400, that the committee has developed.

It is important to note that funds going to the States in this extension are not based on ISTEA averages or some chart approved by conferees 6 years ago. It is based on the year 1997—the best year for donor States since that is the year that the equity program known as 90 percent of payments came into play and provided donor States a more equitable return.

I know there may be some States or contractors who want the safety and security of a long-term bill. Certainly we had hoped to provide them with that and a 6-month extension is not the preferable course of action. But, as my own State has told me, while we want a long-term bill, we do not want a long-term bill at any cost. There may be some uncertainty, but the potential payoff can be great.

If we were to authorize 6 years of transportation spending under the budget agreement, the highway trust fund balance would soar to roughly \$80 billion. It is totally unacceptable for this Congress to continue to collect taxes from American citizens at the gas pump and then not spend those revenues for urgently needed transportation improvements. Even under H.R. 2400, where we begin to more fully spend highway trust fund revenues, the balance will grow to about \$50 billion before stabilizing. The committee will not move forward with legislation that does not set us on a course of living up to the promise of the highway trust fund made over 40 years ago that taxes imposed on the traveling public would be used only for preserving and upgrading our Nation's transportation system.

We need the time provided in this extension to review changing economic conditions and spending and revenue projections in order to set a realistic, responsible level of funding for transportation for the future. H.R. 2516 allows the State programs to continue while we pursue our goal of a multiyear reauthorization bill and higher funding levels.

I urge the House to approve H.R. 2516.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the amendment is agreed to.

There was no objection.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2516, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I, the Chair will now put the question on each motion to suspend the rules on which further proceedings were postponed on Monday, September 29, 1997 in the order in which that motion was entertained, and then on approval of the Journal.

Votes will be taken in the following order. S. 1198, de novo; S. 1161, de novo; H. Con. Res. 131, de novo; H.R. 2233, de novo; H.R. 2007, de novo; H.R. 1476, de novo; H.R. 1262, by the yeas and nays; H.R. 2165, de novo; H.R. 2207, de novo; S. 819, de novo; S. 833, de novo; H.R. 548, de novo; H.R. 2036, de novo; and H.R. 595, de novo, and approval of the Journal.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first such vote in this series.

PERMANENT ENTRY AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN RELIGIOUS WORKERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the Senate bill, S. 1198, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas [Mr. SMITH] that the House suspend rules and pass the Senate bill, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the Senate bill was amended so as to read:

"A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to extend the special immigrant religious worker program, to amend the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 to extend the deadline for designation of an effective date for paperwork changes in the employer sanctions program, and to require the Secretary of State to waive or reduce the fee for application and issuance of a nonimmigrant visa for aliens coming to the United States for certain charitable purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.